



SAFEnet

February 2010

STUDENT'S KEEPING IT SAFE

Montgomery County's Department of Liquor Control (DLC), *Student's Keeping it Safe*, highlights a student or group who is making a positive impact on the community. The Keeping it Safe team will recognize each month an individual or group, between the grade levels of 6th and 12th.

February's *Student's Keeping it Safe* is **Kari Roth**, a student at **Magruder High School**.

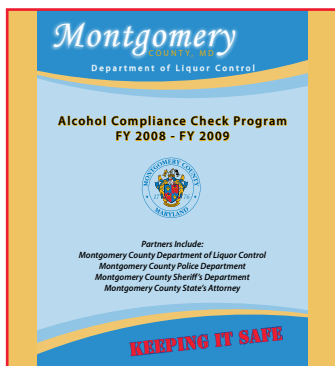
Kari has been instrumental in the creation of the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD). Kari recently produced a two minute PowerPoint presentation on drinking and driving awareness. The presentation was aired on Magruder High School's morning announcements in December 2009 to the entire school body.

Kari, whose brother passed away in 2008 in an alcohol related crash, is dedicated to educating her fellow peers on the consequences of under-21 drinking.

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Newsletter Highlights



Get Local!
What's Happening in
Montgomery County and
Maryland



Tips, Stats, and Signs of
Under-21 Alcohol Use



In the News

Questions?

Montgomery County community members can email related questions and receive updated prevention information. Please email: safenet@montgomerycountymd.gov

Tell a friend about SAFEnet and have them send an email to safenet@montgomerycountymd.gov with the subject line "SIGN ME UP"

To unsubscribe, please send email to SAFEnet@montgomerycountymd.gov with the subject line "UNSUBSCRIBE ME"

Keeping it Safe "team" members: Montgomery County Department of Liquor Control, Montgomery County Police, Keeping it Safe Coalition, Drawing the Line on Substance Abuse Coalition, Montgomery County Safe and Drug Free Schools, Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office, Montgomery County Recreation Department, and the Montgomery County Highway Safety Office
To become a team member, email or call Meg Baker. 240-777-6652, meg.baker@montgomerycountymd.gov

KEEPING IT SAFE

SAFEline- Call 301-670-SAFE to request information on hosting under 21 alcohol free events or to report an upcoming under 21 alcohol party, event, or provider.

To report a party in progress, call the non-emergency police line at 301-289-8000.

For more information on state laws, consequences, or to order materials on Keeping it Safe, please contact the Department of Liquor Control Outreach Office, 240-777-1989, or e-mail dlc@montgomerycountymd.

Montgomery County Department of Liquor Control Issues Report on Alcohol Compliance Program

Montgomery County's Department of Liquor Control (DLC) recently released its first report entitled, "Alcohol Compliance Check Program for FY 2008-09," that outlines the results of a new protocol adopted in 2008 to reduce the availability of alcohol to anyone under 21 years of age. The report found that efforts to reduce the number of establishments that are illegally selling alcohol to minors have already proven successful in Bethesda and Wheaton – two areas that have reported a high number of citations in the past. Of the 60 establishments checked in the past month, only one sale was made. All servers/sellers asked for an ID and/or questioned the youth.

"It's good to see businesses embracing responsible alcohol policies," said DLC Division Chief Kathie Durbin. "Our department feels very strongly that along with the sale and distribution of alcohol comes a responsibility to educate and enforce alcohol laws and regulations to ensure the safety of our residents."

Montgomery County Partners With Business Establishments to Combat Under 21 Alcohol Use

Montgomery County's Department of Liquor Control (DLC) is teaming up with local businesses that sell or serve alcohol in an effort to combat under 21 drinking rates in the County. DLC will be distributing 2010 identification (ID) checking calendars to every establishment in the County with a liquor license to help ensure that underage patrons cannot buy alcohol.

The calendar is an expansion of an award-winning "Keeping It Safe" public education campaign designed to educate businesses and the community on alcohol laws and social host responsibility. An ID checking guide displays a clear message, "If you were not born on or before today's date in 1989 you cannot buy alcohol."

DWI Arrest Report Released

The Montgomery County Police Department released a report showing DWI arrests were up from 2008 to 2009. In 2008, 3,574 DWI arrests were made, 237 of those were under 21. In 2009, there was a total of 4,101 DWI arrests, 298 of those being under the age of 21.

Maryland State Laws and Consequences for Adults who Buy, Furnish or Allow Youth Under 21 to Drink Alcohol

- * Adults could receive a \$2500 fine for the first offense, a \$5000 fine for the second offense. (An offense counts as one under 21 drinker; additional under age drinkers can count as additional offenses.)
- * Homeowners and auto insurance companies may drop a policy.
- * Home or not home, aware or unaware of the party, you could be sued for: personal injury, alcohol poisoning, sexual assault, vandalism, violence, car crashes (death, injuries and car damage.)

Did you know?
In a U.S. government survey of teen drinkers, 69 percent said they got alcohol from family members or friends.

Talk to your Teens About Alcohol Advertising

Alcohol advertising and marketing is widespread. All of us encounter commercial messages from a myriad of sources every day. What's a parent to do?

Next time your family sits down to watch TV, use the occasion as a "teachable moment" to talk about advertising in general, and alcohol advertising in particular.

Encourage your teen to learn how to tell the difference between the facts and the hype and to become a smarter, more responsible, and more confident consumer.

Educators call learning to read between the lines in an ad "media literacy." Visit the National Center for Alcohol and Drug Information (<http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/govpubs/phd711/fivesteps.aspx>) for information on how to look at ads with a critical eye.

Student Video Contest

The Keeping it SAFE Coalition and the Montgomery County Partnership has partnered with four local youth groups: Bethesda Chevy Chase High School SADD, Magruder High School SADD, Watkins Mill High School design class, and Richard Montgomery High School Girl Scouts on a project: to create a poster that describes the signs and dangers of alcohol poisoning and the strategies as to what to do. The posters will be distributed in each public and independent high school, in County liquor stores, and other public settings identified by the participating youth groups. Participating youth will be recognized on April 9th at the Keeping it SAFE awards event.

Answering Questions about Alcohol for Parents

What can you say to people who think teen drinking is not a serious problem? Despite the statistics and the science, some people still think teen drinking is not a serious problem. Here are some of the more common questions neighbors and friends may ask about teen drinking—and the answers.

Q. Wouldn't a lower drinking age allow parents to teach their kids to drink responsibly?

A. Parents don't have to drink with their children to teach them responsible drinking. Additionally, letting teens drink at home sends the wrong message about appropriate conduct away from home.

Q. Don't kids binge because they haven't learned to drink when they're living at home?

A. This question assumes that binge drinking was less common when the legal drinking age was 18 or 19. That assumption is wrong—binge drinking by 12th graders has dropped by 15 percent since 21 was adopted as the national legal drinking age.

Q. Kids are going to drink anyway. They always have. Isn't it better to hold the party at my house, so my kids and their friends aren't out driving?

A. It's not your decision to make. Letting other teens drink in your house undermines other parents, and in Maryland, violates the law. Drunk driving isn't the only danger associated with teen drinking, and you can't guarantee that your teen guests won't drive after they leave your house. Offer non-alcoholic choices rather than another drinking venue.

Q. If the kids drink when I'm home, I can control what happens. Isn't that the best way to prevent teen injury?

A. Can you really control what happens? There are too many real stories about teens who are injured from drinking under adult supervision. Giving permission to drink at home also may be interpreted to mean that you approve if they drink with friends when you're not around.

Q. I drank when I was a kid, and I'm okay, so what's the problem with letting teens drink now?

A. Good thing that you're okay, but many teens are not as lucky. On average, 6.4 American teens die each day from alcohol-related crashes. Teen drinking is associated with long-term alcohol dependence, increased sexual activity, unprotected sex, suicide, smoking, and carrying weapons; in addition, it imposes high financial costs on society.

Q. Doesn't a "legal drinking age" just make alcohol "forbidden fruit" that teenagers try harder to get?

A. If this were true, teen drinking would have increased after adoption of the legal drinking age. It didn't. Having a legal drinking age has substantially reduced drinking by teens. In addition, the drinking habits of 18 year olds have a big influence on younger teens, particularly those who are 15 to 17.

Q. If kids can vote and join the military at 18, why do they have to wait until they're 21 to drink legally?

A. It's the law. In addition, ages of "initiation" vary. You can work at 14, vote at 18 and drink at 21, but you can't run for Congress until you're 25. Researchers who have evaluated the data say the minimum legal drinking age delays the onset of alcohol use. As a result, it reduces drinking-related injuries among teens and the risk of alcohol abuse and dependence later in life.

**For more questions and answers visit, www.dontserveteens.gov*

Student's Keeping It Safe

KARI ROTH

Magruder High School

1. Why do you think your group is a positive influence on today's youth?

The pressure of wanting to be popular in high school pushes many students to make choices that they normally would not make. SADD focuses on the danger of making bad choices like texting while driving, drowsy driving or drinking and tries to show other ways that students can have fun and still stay safe. Our group also talks about potentially dangerous situations that students could find themselves in them and how to get home safely.

2. What do you believe will make a difference in underage drinking (parents, teachers, educating, programs)?

The speakers who were part of the Every 15 Minutes program we held at Magruder last spring were more powerful than any statistics or book they could ever read. For the first time, many students realized what their families would go through if they or one of their friends were killed in a drunk driving accident. We need programs like Every 15 Minutes at every high school and groups like SADD to hold programs and keep up the awareness on this problem all year long.

3. Who are some of your role models?

My brother Jason who was killed in destructive driving accident last fall is one of my biggest role models. His positive attitude, sense of humor and loving heart made him loved by everyone who knew him. His death showed me that bad things can happen to good people and some choices that we make in life can never be taken back. Jason was my motivation to get involved in SADD and I hope that sharing his story will help save other lives.

Washington Sober Ride Program Transports 700 D.C. Area Adults on New Year's Eve

The Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP)'s holiday SoberRide campaign set a new record in 2009, providing free cab rides to 700 adults in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, almost doubling the number of rides provided on New Year's Eve 2008.

This level of ridership translates into SoberRide removing a would-be drunk driver from Greater Washington's roadways every 42 seconds last night.

The Holiday SoberRide program, which concluded at 6 a.m. on Friday Jan. 1, 2010 after kicking-off and running nightly since Dec. 11, 2009, provided a record 3,178 total, free cab rides to local residents age 21 and older, surpassing WRAP's previous record of providing 2,731 total Holiday SoberRides home in 2002. The next SoberRide campaign will run over St. Patrick's Day Holiday.

Source: www.soberride.com



Monitoring the Future Study Releases 2009 Teen Drug and Alcohol Use Data

The University of Michigan Monitoring the Future program announced the 2009 survey results from in-school surveys of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students. Marijuana use among U.S. adolescents has been increasing gradually over the past two years (three years among 12th graders) following years of declining use. Alcohol use has generally been in a long-term, gradual decline at all three grade levels, with 30-day (or past month) prevalence having fallen from recent peak levels by over 40 percent among 8th graders, by over 25 percent among 10th graders, and by about one-sixth among 12th graders. This year only the 8th graders showed a continuation of the decline, while alcohol use in the upper grades leveled off.

More information can be viewed at <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/data/09data.html#2009data-drugs>.

Online Intervention Found to Change Drinking Behavior

An evaluation of the online screening tool CheckYourDrinking.net found that problem drinkers reduced their alcohol consumption by 30 percent at three- and six-month followups -- similar to the success rate for in-person interventions -- according to Canada's Center for Addiction and Mental Health.

"An unfortunate reality is that many problem drinkers do not seek treatment," said lead researcher John Cunningham. "While getting help from a health care professional is ideal, there are barriers to access such as concerns about stigma, a desire to handle problems on one's own, or simply because treatment is not readily available -- online interventions can help reduce these barriers by allowing people to seek help in their own homes."

The website collects self-reported data on drinking habits and provides users with a report comparing their drinking to national averages, information on drinking risks, an estimation of their annual spending on alcohol, a calculation of how much time the user spends intoxicated each year, and safe-drinking guidelines. "When presented these facts in a non-judgmental manner, participants are able to re-evaluate their drinking and may be motivated to reduce their alcohol consumption," said Cunningham.

Source: www.jointogether.org

